

Questions from the Public Meeting on Whitlock Avenue

3 September 2008

Original questions from Council committee meetings

1. Discussion was held about the City of Marietta taking over the current GA-120 within the city limits. The outstanding question regards the permanent control of this road. The question: If the City of Marietta takes control of GA-120, is it possible that the Georgia DOT can unilaterally take back control of this route?

Yes.

2. What is the estimated 20 year maintenance cost of GA-120 (including the loop) within the city limits?

It is estimated that maintenance not currently performed by the city would be \$9.0M for GA120 and \$3.8M GA 120 Alt every 20 years excluding inflation. This estimate includes 1-1/2" milling and resurfacing on a 12 to 15 year recurrence, replacing signs every 10 years, and miscellaneous maintenance such as sidewalks and storm drains. Maintenance of signals is not included in this estimate since the city currently maintains these signals.

Questions from the Public Meeting on 3 September

1. Has better synchronization of the traffic control lights outside of the City been studied?

2006 was the last time it was retimed by the GDOT consultant. As part of the GDOT fast forward program the same consultant has performed quarterly maintenance since then to assure the corridor is working properly.

2. Where will multi-person transit vehicles go?

The CPMWG recommended that large employers provide incentives for multi-person transit vehicle use by their employees. It is assumed that the multi-person transit vehicles would travel from west of Marietta to large employers in Marietta and vice-versa.

3. Is there a "paper trail" of the proceedings of the Cobb – Paulding – Marietta Transportation Working Group? If so, please make it available.

Cobb DOT has records of the meetings that were held with the consultants and full CPMWG. A copy is now available at the city Public Works Department.

4. Do any of the committee members live in the area under discussion?

Yes.

5. Who would pay for this road?

No funding source has been identified therefore we do not know who would pay for the improvements.

6. Why would you only have one outbound, westbound lane, when inbound traffic is just as bad.

The Marietta representatives of the CPMWG made observations that traffic flowed more freely along Whitlock during the morning peak than the evening peak.

7. Why were residents of this area not consulted during the study? Did any of the committee members talk with the neighborhoods?

Public planning charrettes started mid 2006 for the Cobb County 2030 Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

Comment from Mayor Dunaway: “the press reported on several meetings through the years and the press covered my speech in May where I reported the results of the committee.”

8. Has there been any study that would quantify the proposed benefit for the single outbound lane?

No.

9. Have we looked at working with the school system to change the bus schedules to reduce the impact on traffic?

Not in the recent past.

10. Can the necessary right of way be obtained through the national park?

To answer this question requires additional engineering expenditures, discussion with the National Park Service, and discussion with Georgia DOT.

11. Investigate improving the flow of traffic at the intersection of Whitlock and the Loop. Could we use police officer at this intersection to improve the flow of traffic?

An updated signal timing and coordination analysis will be conducted over the next few months.

Using an officer at the intersection is only intended for temporary needs. MPD does not believe that using an officer to direct traffic at the intersection would improve traffic flow.

12. Can the route for Macland Road to Windy Hill be reconfigured to pass through the County Services area?

This would need to be answered by Cobb County.

13. What is the time frame for completion of this Macland Road extension?

Information available on Cobb DOT's web site shows the project opening to traffic mid to late 2010.

14. What is the problem statement for this project? (What problem are we trying to solve with this activity?)

The CPMWG was established to look at transportation issues between Marietta, Cobb, and Paulding then make recommendations to improve traffic flow. I am not aware of a formal problem statement directly addressing the Whitlock Avenue corridor.

15. What specific traffic load factors have been used during the analysis?

This is a question for the consultants involved with the Cobb County 2030 Comprehensive Transportation Plan. The consultant has not yet responded to answer this question.

16. How would success be measured for this project?

Measurement of success would depend upon the problem statement.

17. If an emergency happened at the High School, what are the primary and first two secondary responders? What is the average response time for these three first responders?

The first responder is two blocks away on Polk Street. The second responders are Station 51 in Marietta and the nearest station in Cobb County. Station 51 has responded between 5 minutes, 17 seconds and 8 minutes, 15 seconds since 2006. No information has been provided for the station in Cobb County.

18. Can Whitlock Avenue be placed on some type of National Historic Registry?

I am not aware of a process for this. The Scenic Byway award does not appear to satisfy what is requested.

19. Why are there no sidewalks on Whitlock? Provide current, updated plan for sidewalks on Whitlock Avenue.

Citizens that have communicated with Public Works have expressed concern over the installation of a sidewalk along parts of Whitlock due to impacts to existing trees and fears that sidewalks would contribute to future widening.

There are two current sidewalk projects on Whitlock. A contract for construction of a sidewalk along south side of Whitlock Avenue between Kirkpatrick and the eastern end of Manning Road has been awarded to a contractor. Plans for a sidewalk along the south side of Whitlock Avenue between the edge of the Kennesaw National Battlefield Park and Windsor Drive are complete. It is anticipated that requests for bids to construct this project will be advertised in October. There are currently no approved sidewalk projects for Whitlock Avenue beyond those mentioned above.

Comment from Mayor Dunaway: “The replacement of the water main will give us the OPPORTUNITY of putting in much-needed sidewalks. An opportunity that the city should take advantage of by utilizing any funds we can find. The replacement will tear up that side of the street and unfortunately damage and kill many trees. Once the trenches are opened it will cost much less to prepare for the sidewalks.”

Comment from Councilman Goldstein: “Funding sources for additional sidewalks are limited and consensus among homeowners for the addition of sidewalks along that area is unknown. If there ultimately is consensus, any sidewalk improvements will have to compete with other sidewalks requests, unless the State funds the sidewalks. Currently, most sidewalk improvements in the City are paid for from SPLOST proceeds.”

20. How can the City Council keep the Georgia DOT from unilaterally widening (to four lanes) the entire length of Whitlock Avenue?

The Marietta City Council cannot prevent GDOT from unilaterally making changes to Whitlock Avenue. GDOT can improve the road network to meet transportation needs.

Comment from Mayor Dunaway: “As I understand it, GDOT has never made a major road improvement over the objections of a local government. The state has many, many, more road improvement needs that local governments want than it can fund. They do not want to spend money where it is not wanted by the local government. In addition, this question makes a false assumption that widening all of Whitlock would give the needed improvement.”

Comment from Councilwomen Walquist: “I think that just because they don't make it a practice to venture into unfavorable waters doesn't mean they would not. To mislead the public into thinking they would not would be wrong”

21. Send out the “impediments” and analysis list from committee.

The impediments consensus project lists are attached

22. Statement was made “Traffic simulations only look at a small area, on intersection.” Is this a true statement?

There are various types of traffic simulations. Some look at a point location such as an intersection, some look at a larger number of signals and their relationship to each other.